

Director for Operations; and Stephen Burns, General Counsel.

HHS AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “HHS and the Catholic Church: Examining the Politicization of Grants (minority day of hearing).” Testimony was heard from Susie Baldwin, M.D., Chief, Health Assessment Unit, Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health; and public witnesses.

WATER QUALITY

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing entitled “Integrated Planning and Permitting: An Opportunity for EPA to Provide Communities With Flexibility To Make Smart Investments in Water Quality.” Testimony was heard from Jim Suttle, Mayor, Omaha, Nebraska; Joe Reardon, Mayor, Kansas City, Kansas; Todd Portune, Commissioner, Hamilton County Board of Commissioners; Walt Baker, Director, Division of Water Quality, Utah Department of Environmental Quality; Carter H. Strickland, Jr., Commissioner, New York City Environmental Protection; Nancy Stoner, Acting Assistant Administrator for Water, Environmental Protection Agency; Cynthia Giles, Assistant Administrator for the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, Environmental Protection Agency; and public witnesses.

VA'S COMPENSATED WORK THERAPY PROGRAM

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled “Is It Working: Reviewing VA's Compensated Work Therapy Program.” Testimony was heard from Anthony Campinell, Director, Therapeutic and Supported Employment Programs, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Trade held a hearing on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Testimony was heard from Demetrios Marantis, Ambassador, Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, Office of the United States Trade Representative; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, p. D1339)

H.R. 2192, to exempt for an additional 4-year period, from the application of the means-test presumption of abuse under chapter 7, qualifying members of reserve components of the Armed Forces and members of the National Guard who, after September 11, 2001, are called to active duty or to perform a homeland defense activity for not less than 90 days. Signed on December 13, 2011. (Public Law 112–64)

S. 1541, to revise the Federal charter for the Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. to reflect a change in eligibility requirements for membership. Signed on December 13, 2011. (Public Law 112–65)

S. 1639, to amend title 36, United States Code, to authorize the American Legion under its Federal charter to provide guidance and leadership to the individual departments and posts of the American Legion. Signed on December 13, 2011. (Public Law 112–66)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2011

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Michael T. Scuse, of Delaware, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services, and to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Commodity Credit Corporation, and Chester John Culver, of Iowa, and Bruce J. Sherrick, of Illinois, both to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Federal Agricultural Mortgage Corporation, Farm Credit Administration, 10:30 a.m., SR–328A.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard, to hold hearings to examine environmental risks of genetically engineered fish, 10:30 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Business meeting to consider S. 1108, to provide local communities with tools to make solar permitting more efficient, S. 1142, to promote the mapping and development of the United States geothermal resources by establishing a direct loan program for high risk geothermal exploration wells, to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to improve geothermal energy technology and demonstrate the use of geothermal energy in large scale thermal applications, S. 1149, to expand geothermal production, S. 1160, to improve the administration of the Department of Energy, and the nomination of Arunava Majumdar, of California, to be Under Secretary of Energy, 9:30 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: With the Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety, to hold

joint hearings to examine the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) near-term task force recommendations for enhancing reactor safety in the 21st century, 10 a.m., SD-406.

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Peace Corps and Global Narcotics Affairs, to hold hearings to examine the United States-Caribbean shared security partnership, focusing on responding to the growth of trafficking narcotics in the Caribbean, 11 a.m., SD-419.

Subcommittee on African Affairs, to hold hearings to examine improving governance in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2:15 p.m., SD-419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: To hold hearings to examine prescription drug shortages, focusing on examining a public health concern and potential solutions, 10 a.m., SD-106.

Committee on the Judiciary: Business meeting to consider S. 1821, to prevent the termination of the temporary office of bankruptcy judges in certain judicial districts, S. 1236, to reduce the trafficking of drugs and to prevent human smuggling across the Southwest Border by deterring the construction and use of border tunnels, and the nomination of Brian C. Wimes, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern and Western Districts of Missouri, 10 a.m., SD-226.

House

Committee on the Budget, Full Committee, markup of H.R. 3521, the "Expedited Line-Item Veto and Rescissions Act of 2011." 10 a.m., 210 Cannon.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises, hearing on H.R. 3606, the "Reopening American Capital Markets to Emerging Growth Companies Act of 2011." 9:30 a.m., HVC-210 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Insurance, Housing and Community Opportunity, hearing entitled "The Homeless Children and Youth Act of 2011: Proposals to Promote Economic Independence for Homeless Children and Youth." 10 a.m., 2237 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled "The Collapse of MF Global." 1 p.m., HVC-210 Capitol.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, markup of the following: H.R. 3401, to apply counterinsurgency tactics under a coordinated and targeted strategy to combat the terrorist insurgency in Mexico waged by transnational criminal organizations, and for other purposes; and H.R. 2542, to withhold twenty percent of United States assessed and voluntary contributions to the Organization of American States (OAS) for every permanent council meeting that takes place where Article 20 of the Inter-American Charter is not invoked with regard to Venezuela's recent constitutional reforms, and for other purposes. 11 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, markup of H.R. 3261, the "Stop Online Piracy Act." 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs, hearing on the following: the Harris Neck National Wildlife Refuge and How the Federal Government Obtained Title to This Land and Promises Made to the Original Landowners; H.R. 1171, the "Marine Debris Act Reauthorization Amendments of 2011"; and S. 363, to authorize the Secretary of Commerce to convey property of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to the City of Pascagoula, Mississippi, and for other purposes. 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on TARP, Financial Services and Bailouts of Public and Private Programs, hearing entitled "What the Euro Crisis Means for Taxpayers and the U.S. Economy, Pt. I." 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight and Regulations, hearing entitled "New Medical Loss Ratios: Increasing Health Care Value or Just Eliminating Jobs?" 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Full Committee, hearing entitled "California's High-Speed Rail Plan: Skyrocketing Costs & Project Concerns." 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, hearing entitled "Reviewing the Implementation of the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011." 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.